

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1 and 7, as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A method of forming a luster coating film, comprising the steps of:

(1) applying an aqueous luster thermosetting base coating composition (A), the solids content of the base coating composition (A) being about 5 to about 15 wt.% to a substrate in four or five stages, in such a manner that the thickness of the base coating composition (A) applied in the first stage becomes 1 to 5 μm when cured, the thickness of the base coating composition (A) applied in each of the second and subsequent stages becomes 0.3 to 5 μm when cured, and the total thickness of the base coating composition (A) applied in all of the stages in step (1) is 10 to 15 μm when cured;

(2) applying a thermosetting clear coating composition (B) over the uncured or heat-cured coating layer of the base coating composition (A); and

(3) heating the two-layer coating comprising the base coating composition (A) and clear coating composition (B) to obtain a cured two-layer coating film;

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wherein, in step (1), the solids content of the aqueous luster thermosetting base coating composition (A) one minute after the application in each stage is at least 40 wt. %; and

wherein, in step (1), after each coating stage, the applied composition is allowed to stand, or is preheated at about 50 to about 80°C.

Claim 2 (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the aqueous luster thermosetting base coating composition (A) comprises a water-soluble or water-dispersible, crosslinkable functional group-containing resin, a crosslinking agent and a flaky luster pigment.

Claim 3 (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein, in step (1), the thickness of the aqueous luster thermosetting base coating composition (A) applied in the first stage is 0.3 to 9 μm when cured.

Claim 4 (Canceled).

Claim 5 (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the substrate is an automotive body or a part thereof.

Claim 6 (Original): An automotive body or part thereof having a luster coating film formed by the method according to claim 5.

Claim 7 (Currently amended): A method of forming a luster coating film, comprising the steps of:

(1) applying an aqueous luster thermosetting base coating composition (A), the solids content of the base coating composition (A) being about 5 to about 15 wt. % to a substrate in four or five stages, in such a manner that the thickness of the base coating composition (A) applied in the first stage becomes 1 to 5 μm when cured, the thickness of the base coating composition (A) applied in each of the second and subsequent stages becomes 0.3 to 5 μm when cured, and the total thickness of the base coating composition (A) applied in all of the stages in step (1) is 10 to 15 μm when cured;

(2) applying a thermosetting clear coating composition (B) over the uncured or heat-cured coating layer of the base coating composition (A);

(3) applying a thermosetting clear coating composition (C) over the uncured or heat-cured coating layer of the clear coating composition (B); and

(4) heating the three-layer coating comprising the base coating composition (A), clear coating composition (B) and clear coating composition (C) to obtain a cured three-layer coating film;

wherein, in step (1), the solids content of the aqueous luster thermosetting base coating composition (A) one minute after the application in each stage is at least 40 wt. %; and

wherein, in step (1), after each coating stage, the applied composition is allowed to stand, or is preheated at about 50 to about 80°C.

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Claim 8 (Original): The method according to claim 7, wherein the aqueous luster thermosetting base coating composition (A) comprises a water-soluble or water-dispersible, crosslinkable functional group-containing resin, a crosslinking agent and a flaky luster pigment.

Claim 9 (Original): The method according to claim 7, wherein, in step (1), the thickness of the aqueous luster thermosetting base coating composition (A) applied in the first stage is 0.3 to 9 μm when cured.

Claim 10 (Canceled).

Claim 11 (Original): The method according to claim 7, wherein the substrate is an automotive body or a part thereof.

Claim 12 (Original): An automotive body or part thereof having a luster coating film formed by the method according to claim 11.